

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: Urban Design Committee

DATE, TIME AND

PLACE OF MEETING: Wednesday, October 5, 2005, 3:00 p.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 2nd Floor, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS AND OTHERS

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members: Third World Oforah, Dennis Scheer, Gordon Scholz and Scott Sullivan; (Mike Eckert, JoAnne Kissel and Kim Todd absent).

Others: Mark Jobman (Sinclair Hille); Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth of the Planning Department.

**STATED PURPOSE
OF MEETING:**

Regular Urban Design Committee Meeting

Chair Scheer called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m.

Approval of meeting notes of September 7, 2005

Sullivan moved approval of the September 7, 2005 meeting notes, seconded by Scholz. Motion carried 4-0. Oforah, Scheer, Scholz and Sullivan voting 'yes'; Eckert, Kissel and Todd absent.

Fencing options for downtown planter beds (DLA/Mark Jobman of Sinclair Hille)

Mark Jobman began by stating that Downtown Lincoln Association (DLA) would like to put fencing around the planting beds on O Street along 13th and 14th Street. The reasoning for the fencing is to maintain the plant material. There is heavy pedestrian traffic on that street and pedestrians tend to walk through the planting beds. The plantings are trampled and are needing to be replaced on a yearly basis. The fencing is proposed on both sides of the street.

Oforah asked if they are proposing to take out the curb. Jobman stated that the curb will remain.

Scheer commented that this block gets a tremendous amount of use and has very high pedestrian traffic. He questioned whether the ultimate solution should be to eliminate the shrubs and just have street trees. This street is a classic example of a changing use and maybe we are being more reactive and not designing to accommodate a change. If we introduce the fence, then we are introducing another sidewalk amenity in downtown, and only on one block in downtown.

Zimmer asked if it would be on all four sides of the bed. Jobman stated that it will be on the inner side of the street and the east and west sides. He added that the height of the fence will be about waist height, so as not to create a tripping hazard.

Zimmer asked if the Police Department has looked at the plan, as they could possibly have some concerns. Jobman stated that the Police Department has not seen the design. Zimmer added that the fencing could also possibly become a very convenient bike rack.

Sullivan stated that he does not like the height of the fence, as he feels it is too imposing.

Oforah stated that there are plantings on the north side and is concerned about the cohesion of the corridor.

Sullivan asked if other less imposing options were considered. Jobman stated that they presented four concepts to DLA, and they chose this design because it is the most transparent.

Sullivan asked about the condition of the beds on O Street between 14th and 15th Street. Jobman stated that the beds are not trampled as much in that location. The reason for concentrating on the proposed area is because of budget constraints.

Zimmer asked if there might be a possible solution of having benches along the beds, or if reducing the planting areas with unit pavers might produce a durable but designed appearance. Jobman stated that his initial reaction is that benches would be a very costly solution. Scheer suggested possibly adding more pavement. Oforah stated that he would prefer to make the bed smaller and add some type of brick work or grate. He feels there is a safety issue with the proposed fence.

Scholz asked if part of the problem is that the shrubs are getting trampled before they have a chance to mature and suggested having more of a temporary fencing until the shrubs are established. Jobman stated that they put up the roping in the summer and it has made a difference in the condition of the plant material. Sullivan stated that he likes the idea of a temporary fencing and suggested possibly using black ornamental ballard posts with a black chain rope at 2.5 feet in height. Scheer and Oforah both agreed with that solution.

Oforah made a motion as follows: The committee has concerns with a permanent solution and suggested a temporary fencing, and they also recommend seeking input from the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Scholz. Motion carried 4-0. Oforah, Scheer, Scholz and Sullivan voting 'yes'; Eckert, Kissel and Todd absent.

Update on downtown streetscape projects and plans (DLA)

Jobman presented a list of projects underway or recently completed in downtown including the O Street infill, the 13th Street infill, 13th and M Street streetscape improvement, the 14th and P Street streetscape improvement and the Gold's Galleria streetscape improvement. DLA has spent approximately \$200,000 on these projects.

Miscellaneous

There was no discussion on this agenda item.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:09 p.m.